

# Bad Weather Procedure 2022-23

September 2022

To be reviewed annually

## Overall aim of the plan

This plan covers the contingencies made for extreme bad weather including a heavy snowfall, which may result in **enforced school closure** or **restricted opening**.

This plan aims to prevent:

- The stranding of pupils and staff
- Unnecessary risks travelling to and from school through the use of good communication
- Excessive impact on children's education by considering alternative means of support
- Accidents in the school through use of good risk assessment

## Policy

It is policy that school will open on all normal school days even when some poor weather and road conditions exist. However, in the event of extreme weather conditions including a heavy snowfall, we cannot guarantee that staff will be able to attend school and a decision to close or restrict school opening may have to be made.

If the school is closed, a member of staff (where possible) will be available at school to ensure that messages and communication are maintained for the first few hours of closure. Thereafter, the school will be empty. If there is an enforced school closure, we cannot look after any children. However, should children have already been delivered to school prior to a decision being made to close, we will of course look after them until they can be collected at the earliest possible time.

NB The school will aim to shut as quickly as possible once the decision to close has been taken in order to ensure the safety of children and staff.

## Decision making

If the weather conditions are severe enough to force a full closure this decision will be communicated by the following means:

- Text message to all staff
- Local radio communication
- Text message to all parents/carers
- School website
- School answering machine
- 'A' board notices at both entrances

The decision to close the school will be taken by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors and will be taken by **8.30am** at the latest.

Parents are asked to exercise extreme caution when dropping off or collecting children. We recommend walking to school. We will relax our normal high expectations of punctuality and no child will receive a late

mark. At the end of the day, the children should be collected from the designated place but there will be no after-school clubs or staff meetings. Parents who wish to collect their children early due to the road conditions may do so.

On such days, children's access to the playground may be restricted. Parents are reminded to ensure their children have **warm clothes and suitable footwear in case their journey is disrupted or they are stranded.**

## Access to school during severe icy/snow fall

The caretaker will concentrate on snow/ice clearance and gritting:

- main car park
- pathway leading in from the main entrance gates up to the School office entrance
- pathway around the perimeter of the School to access all classrooms

Priority will be to ensure safe access to the school via the gates located off Pottery road.

THE SCHOOL DOES NOT TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS WHO STRAY FROM THE DESIGNATED CLEARED AND GRITTED ROUTE.

## Communications

As above, once a decision is made. The school phone is likely to be very busy and it may not be possible to get through so we ask parents to use the means of communication outlined above before calling the school.

## Early School closure due to snow fall

If snow falls throughout the school day and a decision is made to close the school earlier than normal a message will be sent to parents via the School text messaging system. Parents will be asked to make their way to school and collect their children a.s.a.p. (please ensure the school has your current email address and telephone number)

Due to sudden snow fall we cannot guarantee that the school site will be gritted sufficiently to ensure the pathways are safe. We therefore ask parents to enter the school site with extreme caution. Parents should collect their children from their classrooms as normal unless told otherwise.

## Q&A for parents – snowy days when school is open

### **Will I be contacted in the event of heavy snow fall resulting in school closure during the school day?**

*Yes, by one of the methods outlined above. However, school will not contact parents individually verbally by telephone.*

### **Do I need to contact school?**

*If you decide not to travel to School in the morning because of the road conditions, please let us know so that we know the children are safe. You can leave a message on the absence line by selecting option 1, however please bear in mind that the telephone line will be busy, so please keep trying.*

### **Should I travel to school or not?**

*Always check the following*

- Local radio

- School website
- Your phone for any messages from the School

*Parents and staff have to decide whether it is safe for them to make the journey to school. Where possible, the school will try to ensure that there is someone at school to greet the pupils but if you arrive at school and no member of staff is present; **your children must remain your responsibility and should not be left unattended at school.***

#### **Will there be after-school clubs?**

No – all clubs will be cancelled. Please keep the office informed if you are delayed on your way to collect the children. As always, we will look after the pupils until you get there.

#### **When should I collect my child?**

Parents who decide to bring their children to school are welcome to collect their child early if it suits them, otherwise please collect at 3:15pm as normal.

#### **Impact on education**

On days when the school has restricted opening, children may not be taught by their usual teachers or in their usual classes, as we may not have our full quota of staff. However, we will ensure that we have an educationally valid day which will include English and Maths at an appropriate level. If there is a prolonged closure of the school, staff will advise work that may be completed via the school website.

#### **Support if stranded in school**

A member of staff will stay in school until all children have been collected.

#### **Heating**

The school heating system is gas-fired; this should not be affected. In the event of breakdown and the necessity to close the school, communication will be through the means outlined above.

#### **Internal safety measures/checks**

Fire escapes and routes – to be cleared and gritted as a priority.

#### **Salt/grit**

The Caretaker will ensure sufficient stock. Gritting in and around the paths for access to the school will be carried out prior to staff, pupil, parent or visitor attendance as necessary and throughout the day if conditions require. When heavy snowfall occurs the Caretaker will concentrate on the priority routes first